

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 13-0139R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Henry, Scott, Stokes, Mosby, Kraft, Clarke, Reisinger, Curran,
Middleton
Introduced and adopted: December 5, 2013

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Request for State Action – Statewide Bottle Deposit Law

FOR the purpose of calling on the General Assembly to address the serious litter problems caused by improperly disposed of beverage containers, while acting to significantly reduce Maryland’s greenhouse gas emissions, by enacting a law creating a refundable bottle deposit in Maryland.

Recitals

Beverage containers are one of the most prevalent, unsightly, and harmful forms of litter in Maryland. Studies have shown that they make up as much as half of all litter that ends up in our threatened waterways, they tend to blight our landscapes for extended periods of time since they do not biodegrade, and the emissions cost to replace them if they’re not recycled is as much as four times higher than for the average item sent to a landfill.

Failure to properly recycle these bottles clearly carries significant costs for society. And yet, Marylanders currently recycle only 41.3% of all used beverage containers, while other states have achieved recycling rates as high as 90%. The secret to these much higher rates has been the passage of bottle deposit laws in our sister states.

Requiring a refundable bottle deposit in Maryland would likely at least double our bottle recycling rate – taking nearly 1.5 billion bottles out of the waste stream annually and preventing them from littering our streets or clogging our waterways. Increased recycling would, in turn, result in an emissions reduction of as many as 241,000 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, according to a 2011 State study. All of this could be achieved at very little tax-payer or consumer expense while simultaneously creating hundreds of new green jobs.

The General Assembly has considered taking this commonsense step in the past, but has so far been unable to agree on the details of a bottle deposit bill. With the problems caused by litter and global warming becoming ever more obvious and acute, now is the time to finally act to address the costs our failure to recycle beverage containers in adequate numbers are causing by enacting this simple, cheap, and effective reform.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the Council calls on the General Assembly to address the serious litter problems caused by improperly disposed of beverage containers, as well as act to significantly reduce Maryland’s greenhouse gas emissions, by enacting a law creating a refundable bottle deposit in Maryland.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor, the
2 Honorable Chairs and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the
3 Maryland General Assembly, the President of the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House
4 Speaker, the Mayor, and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.